

righteousness and prosperity, as assured in this divine promise. Is it that absolute righteousness must be followed by absolute prosperity? Righteousness involves in this, and in every respect, not piety only, nor church going merely, both are good and requisite, but it means in a supreme sense "right doing." The observing and maintaining right relationships. Physically, morally, spiritually—Did Jesus mean that this promise should be limited to the spiritual only, or did he intend it should include the material as well? It is contended by many that the promised food and raiment means spiritual food and raiment. This may be true and all right in part, but it alone, certainly is disassociating. Much that to us seems to be included in the promise—in "these things" we may conclude very justly, that there are two sides to the promise. The material and the spiritual. The one assuming spiritual prosperity the other material prosperity. Logically, God, certainly has obligated himself as pointedly to the one as to the other. It is loudly asserted in the commercial world that "a man cannot be righteous and succeed in business." It is certainly true that the commercial conscience has been sorely seared, but this divine promise is based upon absolute righteousness and justice, and God assures the reward of prosperity. It is God's promise and cannot fail.

Yet, from the material side we see that this is not true. "In Italy 100,000 people go mad from hunger every year. In London 37 per cent of the population are in abject poverty, and only 18 per cent of the population are much above the grade of ordinary comfort. In the British Isles 92 per cent of the population own less than one-third of one per cent of the wealth. In the United States 90 per cent of the population own about one quarter of the wealth. In New York, three persons out of every four dying do not leave enough property to attract the attention of the Probate Court." We would inquire, are these unfortunates more unrighteous than their fellows? It presents apparent contradictions and seemingly a contradiction unreconcilable. But to the candid and thoughtful there is no difficulty in reconciling God's promise. The whole difficulty hinges on the principle of individual and commercial righteousness. God has provided us with every thing, muscle and brain, filled the earth with treasures, given us every facility for prosperity. But the proper moral standard has not been maintained. Unrighteous institutions have been permitted to creep into society and hence the seeming failure. God has kept his promise, but man has failed on his part, and therefore the scenes of misery, wretchedness and poverty.

Shall these conditions ever be changed? Theories from human stand-points are presented as remedies. Sociology, Social Democracy and Socialism are offered, but they are human, and will fail. The world

must be brought back to God's righteousness and then will we enjoy prosperity. But we enquire "when shall these things be?" When man's inhumanity to man is no more. When righteousness shall fill the whole earth. When the Son of man, our long expected Lord shall come. When the new heaven and the new earth shall be fully established, wherein dwelleth nothing but absolute righteousness, then will we realize fully what Jesus meant when he said all "these things shall be added unto you."

#### THE KINGDOM FIRST

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*Seek ye first the kingdom of God and, and his righteousness.—Matt. 6:33.*

I wonder why so many people, who profess to believe the Bible, as the word of God, accept its teachings as a rule of faith and practice, believe that God is all-wise, all-mighty and all-powerful, and then in the face of it all, will deliberately do everything contrary from the way He teaches them to do. Jesus tells us to *first seek his kingdom and his righteousness*, and all other necessary things shall be added unto us for he knows that we have need of these things.

Why can we not for once, take him at his word and test his sayings? Do we in reality believe the Word? Then why not show it by our actions.

Nothing makes me more tired than to know that professing Christians are passing churches almost every night in a week to go to a social, lodge, party, theatre or any old place, and then when there is service in God's house, they are so worn out and so weary that many of them can not get there at all while others are too indifferent to take an active part in the service when they are there. Now it makes no difference at all what you or I think of such things, but honestly what do you think that *God thinks* of such things? Need we suppose for one moment that we can deceive God into believing that we are seeking His kingdom and his righteousness first, when indeed we are seeking everything else *first* and these things *last*.

How can we claim the precious promises of the Bible, if we seek not to do the Will of the Father. Can we expect him to love us and bestow his rich blessings upon us daily. O, the blessings of the blessed Christ life, how sweet they are! How can we afford to miss any of them? "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled." Why then seek after those things which do not satisfy the soul?

Only recently I had a good testimony from a young man who had been seeking everything else except the blessings of God. He could not understand how I could be satisfied with what he called a lonesome life. I told him the secret of my happiness was the blessed Book, and fellowship with the precious Saviour. He said he went from shows to theatres, from theatres to parties, from parties to dances and from dances to

the saloon, and that nothing satisfies him any more. I asked him if these things really make him happy, he said, "No, but I can not live without some kind of excitement." He further more confessed that these things do a fellow no good but take his time and money. So day after day time rolls by and thousands of people are rushing on to eternal destruction. Then will we too let these things draw us away from the Kingdom and righteousness? Take heed "No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye can not serve God and mammon."

Are we indeed giving God our best service, our sweetest thoughts, our first and best love? Are we planning how to live better lives, so that we may do better work for him? Are we willing to let the Holy Spirit lead us in *all things*? Do we think of God as a dear, loving Father who cares for us and loves to make us happy, and causes all things to work together for good, if we truly love him, altho we often fail to see the "good." Some time when we think we are planning things for God, he will plainly show us that *our plans* are not *his plans*, and by and by we will see that his plans are the best after all. Let us then live so close to him that we may know and do his will, for in this way alone may we experience what is true happiness. Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven."

In the keeping of God's commands there is a great reward, and in waiting upon God, in the means of his appointments, the obedient soul renews its strength. There are some who make a small thing an excuse for absenting themselves from the house of God upon the Sabbath.

Out about our business on Sat. and Mon. Out several evenings in the week to please self, whatever may be the weather, they will stay at home on the Sabbath and urge excuses that they ought to be ashamed to present to their fellow-men, and that they *will* be ashamed to present to the Great Judge. If the pastor acted this way, they would be the first to complain. But is there one Bible for the pastor and another for the member? If it is the pastor's duty to preach, it is the duty of the member to be there to hear him. If the service is such that must be carried on without the pastor's aid, as S. S. or Young People's Meetings then every member is needed all the more to help make the meeting a success. Such persons never know how much they miss by their neglect of the means of grace. What a blessing Thomas lost by not being present with the other disciples, in the upper room, when our Lord appeared to them after his resurrection and said, "Peace be unto you." Of course we do not know why he was not there, but since he was in a dark, unbelieving state of mind, it is quite likely he could have been there, had he wished. He